WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for dispensing and cutting measured amounts from a roll of web material, said apparatus comprising:

a housing;

a roll carrier disposed within said housing to rotationally carry a roll of web material to be dispensed;

a rotatable drum disposed within said housing proximate to said roll carrier, said roll carrier biased towards said rotatable drum so that the roll of web material carried by said roll carrier is frictionally engaged against said drum thereby causing said drum to rotate upon a free end of the web material being pulled from said housing;

a rotatable cutting mechanism mounted within said housing external of and adjacent to said rotatable drum, said cutting mechanism including at least one cutting blade that moves across the conveying path of the web material as said cutting mechanism rotates to automatically cut the web material; and

wherein said cutting mechanism is engaged and moved by said rotatable drum along at least a portion of the rotational arc of said rotatable drum causing said cutting mechanism to rotate and cut the web material.

2. The apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said rotatable drum comprises a radially extending lever arm, said lever arm engaging and moving said cutting mechanism along a portion of the rotational arc of said rotatable drum.

3. The apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said cutting mechanism comprises a roll generally parallel to said rotatable drum, said at least one cutting blade extending radially from said roll.

4. The apparatus as in claim 3, wherein said rotatable drum comprises a longitudinally extending groove defined in the circumference thereof over which the web material passes in its conveying path, said cutting blade moving into said groove at a rotational cutting position of said cutting mechanism to cut the web material overlying said groove.

5. The apparatus as in claim 3, wherein said rotatable drum comprises a lever arm extending radially therefrom, said lever arm engaging and moving said cutting mechanism along a rotational arc portion of said rotatable drum.

6. The apparatus as in claim 3, further comprising a plurality of said cutting blades equally circumferentially spaced around said roll.

7. The apparatus as in claim 6, wherein said roll further comprises a plurality of circumferentially spaced cam members extending radially therefrom with at least one said cam member disposed between adjacent said cutting blades.

8. The apparatus as in claim 7, wherein said rotatable drum comprises a lever arm extending radially therefrom, said lever arm engaging one of said cam members for each rotation of said rotatable drum such that each of said cam members is engaged in successive operations of said apparatus.

9. The apparatus as in claim 8, wherein said cam members are circumferentially spaced such that each of said cam members is engaged and

disengaged by said lever arm at generally the same rotational position of said rotational drum.

10. The apparatus as in claim 1, wherein said rotatable drum is spring biased with an eccentric device to a neutral position, said eccentric device causing said rotatable drum to continue to rotate to said neutral position subsequent to cutting of the web material.

11. An apparatus for dispensing and cutting measured amounts from a roll of web material, said apparatus comprising:

a housing;

a roll carrier disposed within said housing to rotationally carry a roll of web material to be dispensed;

a rotatable drum disposed within said housing proximate to said roll carrier such that the web material runs around at least a portion of a circumference of said rotatable drum along its conveying path causing said rotatable drum to rotate upon a free end of the web material being pulled from said housing;

a cutting mechanism including at least one cutting blade movably mounted within said housing external of said rotatable drum, for each dispensing operation of said apparatus said cutting mechanism is engaged and moved by said rotatable drum along a portion of the rotational arc of said rotatable drum such that said cutting blade crosses a conveying path of the web material and cuts the web material.

12. The apparatus as in claim 11, wherein said cutting mechanism comprises a roll that rotates about a fixed axis, said cutting blade extending radially from said roll.

13. The apparatus as in claim 12, wherein said roll is engaged and moved by a radially extending member rotationally fixed to said rotatable drum.

14. The apparatus as in claim 13, further comprising a plurality of said cutting blades circumferentially spaced around said roll and a plurality of radially extending cam members alternately spaced between said cutting blades.

15. The apparatus as in claim 14, wherein said cam members and said blades are circumferentially spaced such that said radially extending member engages and moves one said cam member and associated said blade for each rotation of said rotatable drum.

16. The apparatus as in claim 12, wherein said blade cuts the web material at a location on the circumference of said rotatable drum.

17. The apparatus as in claim 16, wherein said rotatable drum comprises a longitudinally extending groove defined in the circumference thereof, said blade moving into said groove to cut the web material.

18. The apparatus as in claim 11, wherein said rotatable drum is spring biased with an eccentric device to a neutral position, said eccentric device causing said rotatable drum to continue to rotate to said neutral position subsequent to cutting of the web material.